

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-08

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ADP-00 PRS-01 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00

RSC-01 RSR-01 M-03 NSC-10 /049 W

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P 161805 Z JUN 73

FM AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6578

C O N F I D E N T I A L PORT AU PRINCE 0971

LIMDIS

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, HA

SUBJECT: PORT AU PRINCE RUMOR MILL ALLEGES ANTI GOH
STATEMENT IN U. S.

1. UNUSUALLY PERSISTENT AND WIDESPREAD RUMORS CIRCULATING
IN PORT AU PRINCE THIS WEEK THAT FORMER AMBASSADOR KNOX HAS
MADE SOME SORT OF STATEMENT CRITICAL OF GOH.

2. MOST COMMON VERSION IS THAT AMBASSADOR EXPRESSED
DISAPPOINTMENT AT FAILURE OF GOH TO ADVANCE HAITI' S
INTERESTS AND AT PREVALENCE OF CORRUPTION. ANOTHER VERSION
LESS WIDESPREAD BUT MORE VICIOUS ALLEGES AMBASSADOR
DESCRIBED PRESIDENT JEAN CLAUDE DUVALIER AS SELF- INDULGENT
CHILD AND SAID UNITED STATES SHOULD ACT FAST TO GET HIM
OUT OF POWER BEFORE HAITI BECAME A BIG PROBLEM.

3. WE HAVE HAD THESE RUMORS BROUGHT TO OUR ATTENTION
BY FOREIGN DIPLOMATS, JOURNALISTS AND A VARIETY OF LOCAL
BUSINESSMEN. TWO FRIENDLY CONTACTS HAVE TOLD US THAT SOME
PEOPLE IN GOH BELIEVE THE RUMORS. SEVERAL CONTACTS HAVE
SUGGESTED WE ISSUE A DENIAL.

4. WE HAVE HEARD FROM NO ONE REPEAT NO ONE WHO HAS HAD
ORIGINAL KNOWLEDGE OF THE ALLEGED STATEMENT. SOME CLAIM
TO HAVE HEARD IT FROM OTHERS WHO HEARD IT ON A PARIS
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RADIO BROADCAST. OTHERS CLAIM TO HAVE HEARD THAT STILL
OTHERS READ IT IN THE NEW YORK TIMES OF JUNE 8, 1973.
FOR UNKNOWN REASONS THAT DAY' S ISSUE OF THE NEW YORK
TIMES WAS NOT RECEIVED BY HAITI SUBSCRIBERS INCLUDING

EMBASSY. THIS FACT ALONE MAY HAVE FUELED THE RUMORS.

5. COMMENT: FARFETCHED AS THESE RUMORS ARE MANY PEOPLE HERE SEEM TO BELIEVE THEM, SOME REGRETFULLY AND OTHERS WITH OBVIOUS DELIGHT. WE BELIEVE IT WOULD BE USELESS TO ISSUE ANY SORT OF FORMAL DENIAL SINCE THIS WOULD ONLY FURTHER FEED THE RUMOR MILL. HOWEVER IT WOULD BE OF SOME HELP IF DEPARTMENT COULD POUCH US PROMPTLY A COPY OF THE FRIDAY JUNE 8, 1973 ISSUE OF THE NEW YORK TIMES WHICH WE COULD USE TO GOOD ADVANTAGE IN OUR INDIVIDUAL EFFORTS TO KNOCK DOWN THIS CANARD. IT WOULD ALSO HELP IF DEPARTMENT COULD LET US KNOW IF ANYTHING APPEARED IN U. S. MEDIA WHICH COULD HAVE BEEN DISTORTED TO FIT THE PATTERN OF THESE RUMORS.
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